

Planning, Research, & Development

Upcoming Events:

PLANNING WORKSHOP for PLANNING COMMISSIONERS, ELECTED OFFICIALS & STAFF

Sponsored by
West Texas Section of the
American Planning Association

Location: The Tigua Pueblo Tribal Council Chambers
9241 Socorro Road, El Paso, Texas
Date: Thursday, October 28, 2004
Time: 6:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. (*Registration begins at 6 p.m.*)

Training Topics:

- Planning 101: Introduction to Urban Planning
- Roles & Responsibilities of Appointed & Elected Officials
- Q and A Open House and Reception

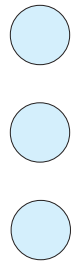
Training Providers:

- Patricia D. Adauto, Deputy City Manager for Building and Planning Services, City of El Paso and former Planning Director for the City of El Paso
- Martin Sanchez, Chief Planner, Kimley-Horn & Associates and Planning Officials Development Officer for the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association

Registration Fee: \$25.00

Deadline: October 18, 2004; pre-registration available, add \$5 for on-site registration.

For additional details and registration materials see Pages 4 & 5



Director's Note:

In September, El Paso's City Council adopted a budget for Fiscal Year 2004-05. A slow-down in the economy, reductions in federal funding, and debt service for voter-approved quality of life improvements led to an austere financial picture. As a result of the budget, the Planning, Research and Development Department deleted three existing staff positions in order to meet our financial goal. On a positive note, a promotion to Planner II, in Land Development, was authorized and a vacant Transportation Planner II position has been filled. Three additional urban planners may be added to the Department staff in 2005 as funding becomes available.

The Neighborhoods First program, under the guidance of Mark Alvarado, held its first Neighborhoods Summit on the University of Texas El Paso campus. It was well attended and neighborhood representatives were provided with informative training on a variety of topics. It also served as a wonderful opportunity for groups throughout the City to network and exchange strategies with each other.

The Neighborhoods Matter program continues to develop and refine plans for Montoya Heights and the Five Points Neighborhoods. All of our Neighborhood Planners received certificates of training after attending a three-week seminar on conflict resolution and communication. Dr. Blaine Goss, Professor of Communications at New Mexico State University, provided the specialized training for them.

The Department's portion of the City of El Paso website at www.elpasotexas.gov continues to expand and improve. Agendas for every meeting we support can be found there. Demographics have been updated, maps have been added, and the site has been given a "new look" by our Information Technology website experts. If you have not visited our site lately, it is well worth a few minutes of your time.

It has been a very productive three months. This next quarter includes many of our national holidays. Have a Happy Halloween, enjoyable Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and a peaceful Happy New Year!

George G. Sarmiento, AICP



Neighborhood Summit City of El Paso

On Saturday August 28th, the City of El Paso sponsored the first Neighborhood Summit at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). All eight City Representatives and the Empowerment Zone provided financial support. One hundred seventy-five individuals attended the event, representing forty neighborhood associations throughout the City of El Paso.

The event featured keynote speeches from Dr. Diana Natalicio, University of El Paso's President, U.S. Congressman Sylvestre Reyes, Police Chief Richard Wiles and Mayor Joe Wardy. The Summit also included an Information Exposition with participants from El Paso Green Sweep, Sun Metro, the Empowerment Zone, and City Departments that provide key services for neighborhoods.

This Summit was held to provide an educational workshop-style forum for neighborhood members. Its focus was to provide a broader understanding government and a holistic approach in developing the character and quality of life for their neighborhood. It was also a great opportunity for neighborhood members to network and exchange ideas. The featured workshops included establishing a Neighborhood Watch, the role the Planning Department plays in the development process, information on grant writing, all about Healthy Communities, financial literacy, community consensus building, pedestrian safety and other relevant topics geared towards making their respective neighborhoods a better and safer place to live.

The Neighborhoods Summit was a great success. For their contributions to the event, a special thank you to the City's Department of Community Development and Housing for their generous door prizes. The Parks and Recreation Department donated prizes for those in attendance. The event could not have occurred without the assistance of Humberto Escalante, Planning Department, and Neighborhood Coordinator Soraya Ayub from Community Development. Thanks to UTEP for use of their specialized classroom facilities and technical equipment support.

One of the Neighborhoods First program goals is to provide a similar training and educational opportunities every six months. It is important to continue the process of providing neighborhood associations with information and community assets that will help sustain each neighborhood association's effort in the future.



Mark Alvarado, Neighborhood Liaison



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Training Location Map





**APA
TEXAS**

**PLANNING WORKSHOP
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PLANNING COMMISSIONERS,
ELECTED OFFICIALS & STAFF**

Registration Form:

Your Name: _____

Your Company: _____

Address: _____

Tel: (_____) _____ - _____ Fax: (_____) _____ - _____

Your E-Mail: _____

Please check all that apply:

Practitioner

Elected Official

Appointed Official

How many years on the Planning Commission/Elective Office: _____

Issues of Importance to your local Planning Commission/Municipality:

Deadline for Mail-in Registration is Monday, October 18, 2004.

Checks can be made payable to: APA West Texas Section

Registration Fee: \$25 (early & pre-registration) \$30.00 (on-site)

Check

Purchase Order:

Cash:

- I am enclosing my check to West Texas APA for \$25.00: _____
- I am **pre-registering** and will pay registration at the workshop for \$25.00: _____
- On site registration, please add \$5 and pay by cash or check at the workshop \$30.00 _____

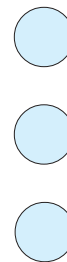
Please Mail Registration to:

APA West Texas Section

ATTN: Workshop

P.O. Box 51

El Paso, TX 79940



Conflict Resolution and Communications Training:

Neighborhood Planners participated in an intensive training session addressing conflict resolution. Dr. Blaine Goss, a professor of Communications at NMSU, created this specialized training presented as a series over a three week period. Dr. Goss customized this training to the needs of the neighborhood planners. The training was a combination of theory and practice with many modules and exercises to practice what was learned.

In the six sessions (two per week for three weeks), planners learned how to manage conflict, rather than avoid it. Dr. Goss spoke on the importance of being thoroughly prepared for meetings and how to manage perceptions of an audience and the expectations of different participants in meetings where conflict may arise. In situations where conflict arises, measures for how to address what is behind the conflict were discussed and explained. Though each situation may be different, the processes are similar in these situations. Case studies and an interactive exercise helped in this approach where Dr. Goss asked to identify the critical incident that precipitates conflict.

The lessons learned included the best approaches to address conflict including involvement of all key stakeholders and deep listening for what may be driving conflict. The outcome of conflict resolution is dependent on input and what is presented so asking the right questions is important. If a problem or concern is not mentioned, it will not be resolved. The quality of the solution set depends on addressing the problems. Encouraging all parties to participate is an important key point so that all views are expressed. Key approaches discussed for conflict resolution included: Ask questions to seek information, not agreement. Focus on issues, not personalities. Find the underlying issues, the unstated ones. Underlying issues-people's goals, objectives, needs, and feelings must be resolved before you can address the stated concerns.

The training is part of the Department's on-going training to better equip staff to work with and for the public.



Photograph of existing land use in Northeast El Paso's Master Planned Area.

Transportation Planning Update:

The Long Range Division has been studying the transportation impact of the proposed Public Service Board (PSB) West and Northeast Master Plans. Both plans propose to alter the major thoroughfare network from the existing comprehensive plan.

On the Westside, the new master plan removed two roads that earlier plans identified as intersecting with Transmountain/Loop 375 in the vicinity of the Tom Mays entrance to the Franklin Mountains State Park. The PSB plan proposes undeveloped open space in that area, with traffic restricted to crossing Transmountain further downhill on what would be the extension of Artcraft Road, called Paseo del Norte at that point.

The PSB plan included the results of a traffic analysis demonstrating that the changes would not cause congestion in the future. Since the proposed Westside plan includes substantial open spaces and more compact development than the existing comprehensive plan, the number of roads previously thought to be required could be reduced.

The PSB Northeast master plan covers a much larger area than the Westside Plan (14,563 acres vs 1909 acres.) It proposes land uses for the next 60-70 years. The Northeast plan departs from the direction of the existing Plan for El Paso in that it proposes higher density residential and non-residential development in Northeast El Paso. The overall concept is to create an activity node in the northeast that provides more balanced regional growth than was previously planned on the site.

Such a drastic change from the old comprehensive plan necessitates a thorough analysis of the impacts on infrastructure and services. The Long Range division is working with the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to analyze the changes that might be required in transportation infrastructure if the PSB area develops as proposed. The study will look forward only 25 of the 60-70 years and will take into consideration alternative transportation modes such as transit and bicycling.



*El Paso Water Utility's
Master Thoroughfare
Plan for Northeast El Paso.*

New City Committee to Study and Define Arroyos

On August 31, 2004, the El Paso City Council created an ad hoc committee to investigate and define geologically occurring contours on and around the Franklin Mountains that could serve as water conveyance and/or runoff channels. While the Committee has no formal name, it has been nicknamed "The Arroyo Committee."

The Committee will:

- create definitions for the water conveyance channels,
- assess impact on commercial and residential development within and around such conveyance area,
- review impact to development within those areas,
- review applicable statutes from other southwestern cities.

The nine-member committee consists of three representatives of the El Paso Association of Builders, Dr. David V. LeMone of the University of Texas at El Paso, a City Engineering Department representative, a City Planning Department representative, two members appointed by the Mayor from a list of members of Recognized Neighborhood Association, and one member of the Greater El Paso Association of Realtors. Of the Mayor's appointees from the Neighborhood Associations, one will be a biologist/ecologist and the other will be a hydrologist.

The Committee will have 90 days to return to City Council with an appropriate ordinance. In the process of developing their ordinance, recommendations will be obtained from the El Paso Development Coordinating Committee and El Paso City Plan Commission prior to presentation of an appropriate ordinance to Council. Administrative assistance will be provided by Planning, Research and Development and Representative Rojas's office.



An example of a natural drainage way and native vegetation within Mountain Park Subdivision, Northeast El Paso.

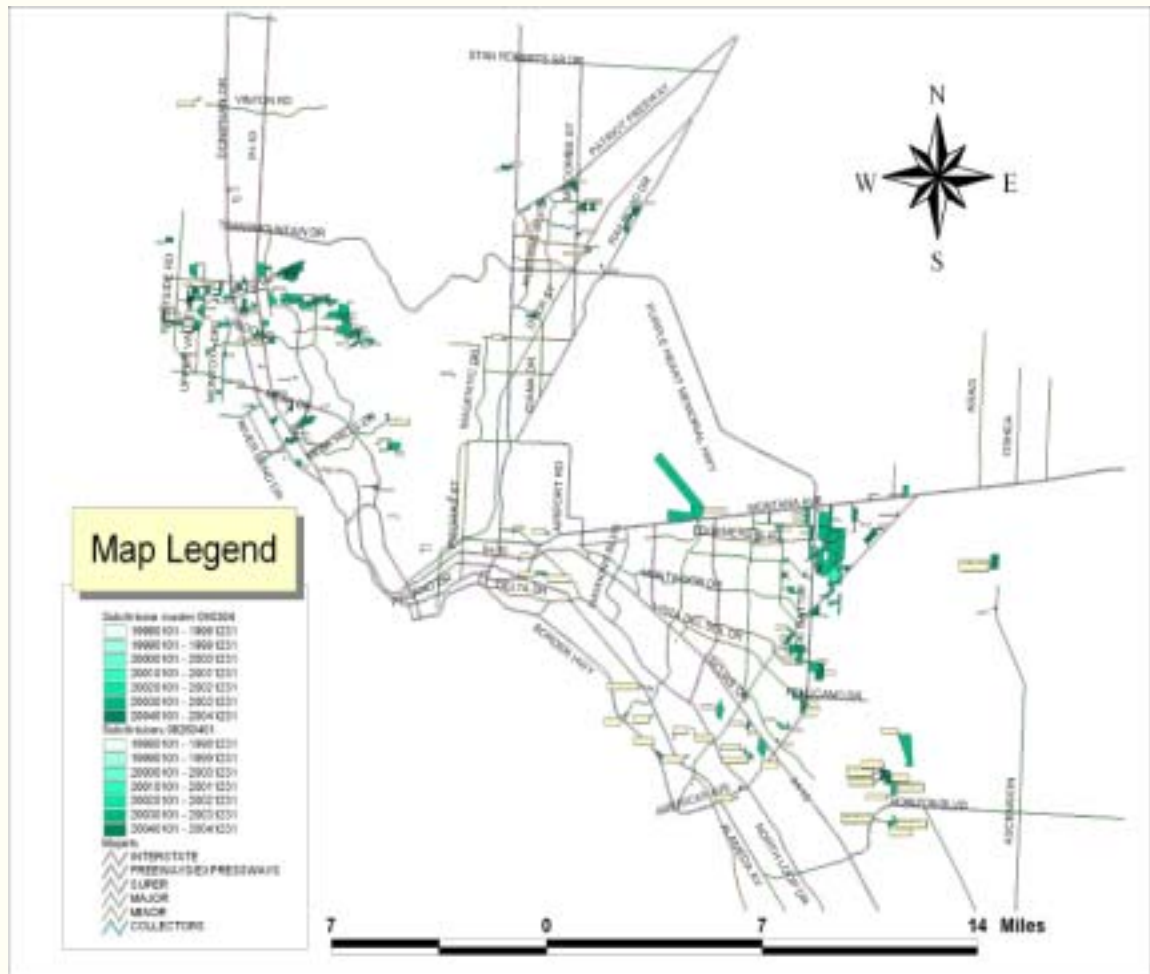
A Comparison of Rezoning Cases Submitted in 2003 Versus 2004:

	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2004	Jul-Sep 2004	Jul-Sep 2003
Development Coordination Committee (DCC)				
Approval Recommendation	9	18	13	10
Denial Recommendation	1	1	1	0
Withdrawn Prior to DCC Review	1	0	1	0
Pending	2	1	7	0
Total Cases Reviewed by DCC	11	20	14	10
City Plan Commission (CPC)				
Approval Recommendation	9	18	11	16
Denial Recommendation	1	1	1	4
Withdrawn prior to CPC Review	1	1	1	2
Pending	2	2	10	0
Total Cases Reviewed by CPC	11	22	12	18
City Council				
Approval	0	12	0	16
Denial	0	2	0	5
Withdrawn Prior to CC Review	0	0	0	0
Upheld CPC Recommendation	0	12	0	0
Reversed CPC Recommendation	0	1	0	0
Pending	0	14	23	0
Total Cases Reviewed by Council	0	14	0	21

**A Comparison of Subdivision Platting Activity in
2003 Versus 2004:**

	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2004	Jul-Sep 2004	Jul-Sep 2003
Subdivisions Recorded	18	17	10	13
Dwelling Units Recorded	854	1,237	599	1,179
Acres Recorded	297.84	330.00	19.32	327.39
New SD's Processed	23	22	24	15

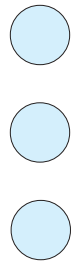
Subdivision Activity in El Paso:



Note: For a close-up view of the map, use the "Zoom-In" button in the Adobe Acrobat Software Tool Bar.

A Comparison of Detailed Site Development Plans Submitted in 2003 Versus 2004:

	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2004	Jul-Sep 2004	Jul-Sep 2003
Development Coordinating Committee (DCC)				
Approval Recommendation	5	4	4	8
Denial Recommendation	0	0	0	1
Withdrawn Prior to DCC Review	0	0	0	1
Pending	3	1	1	0
Total Cases Reviewed by DCC	5	5	4	9
City Plan Commission (CPC)				
Approval Recommendation	3	6	4	6
Denial Recommendation	0	1	0	2
Withdrawn prior to CPC Review	0	0	0	1
Pending	5	1	1	0
Total Cases Reviewed by CPC	3	8	4	8
City Council				
Approval	0	2	0	2
Denial	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn Prior to CC Review	0	0	0	0
Upheld CPC Recommendation	0	2	0	0
Reversed CPC Recommendation	0	0	0	0
Pending	0	3	5	0
Total Cases Reviewed by Council	0	2	0	2

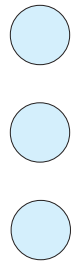


A Comparison of Special Permit Cases Submitted in 2003 Versus 2004:

	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2004	Jul-Sep 2004	Jul-Sep 2003
Development Coordinating Committee (DCC)				
Approval Recommendation	7	8	3	8
Denial Recommendation	2	0	0	2
Withdrawn Prior to DCC Review	1	0	0	0
Pending	7	1	5	0
Total Cases Reviewed by DCC	8	9	3	10
City Plan Commission (CPC)				
Approval Recommendation	7	8	3	9
Denial Recommendation	0	3	0	2
Withdrawn prior to CPC Review	0	1	0	1
Pending	10	4	5	0
Total Cases Reviewed by CPC	7	16	3	11
City Council				
Approval	0	9	0	7
Denial	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn Prior to CC Review	0	2	0	0
Upheld CPC Recommendation	0	9	0	0
Reversed CPC Recommendation	0	0	0	0

A Comparison of Zoning Board of Adjustment Activity in 2003 Versus 2004:

	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2004	Jul-Sep 2004	Jul-Sep 2003
Special Exceptions				
Residential				
Approved	49	29	41	51
Denied	1	0	0	1
Withdrawn	3	0	1	0
Pending	0	14	7	0
Total	53	43	49	52
Special Exceptions				
Commercial				
Approved	1	4	2	1
Denied	0	0	0	1
Withdrawn	0	0	0	0
Pending	0	1	0	0
Total	1	5	2	2
Variances Residential				
Approved	2	2	3	1
Denied	1	0	2	0
Withdrawn	0	0	0	0
Pending	0	2	2	0
Total	3	4	7	1
Variances Commercial				
Approved	0	1	1	0
Denied	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn	0	0	0	0
Pending	0	1	2	0
Total	0	2	3	0
Letters of Zoning	74	66	70	62
Verification				



A Comparison of Historic Preservation Cases Submitted in 2003 Versus 2004:

Certificates of Appropriateness

Historic District	Jan-Marn 2004	Apr-Jun 2004	Jul-Sep 2004	Jul-Sep 2003
Austin Terrace	0	1	0	4
Chihuahuita	0	0	1	0
Downtown	1	0	0	3
Magoffin	0	0	1	0
Manhattan Heights	1	2	6	3
Old San Francisco	0	0	0	0
Sunset Heights	0	4	2	3
Ysleta	1	0	0	1
Mission Trail	0	0	0	0
Independent	0	0	1	10
Total	3	7	11	24

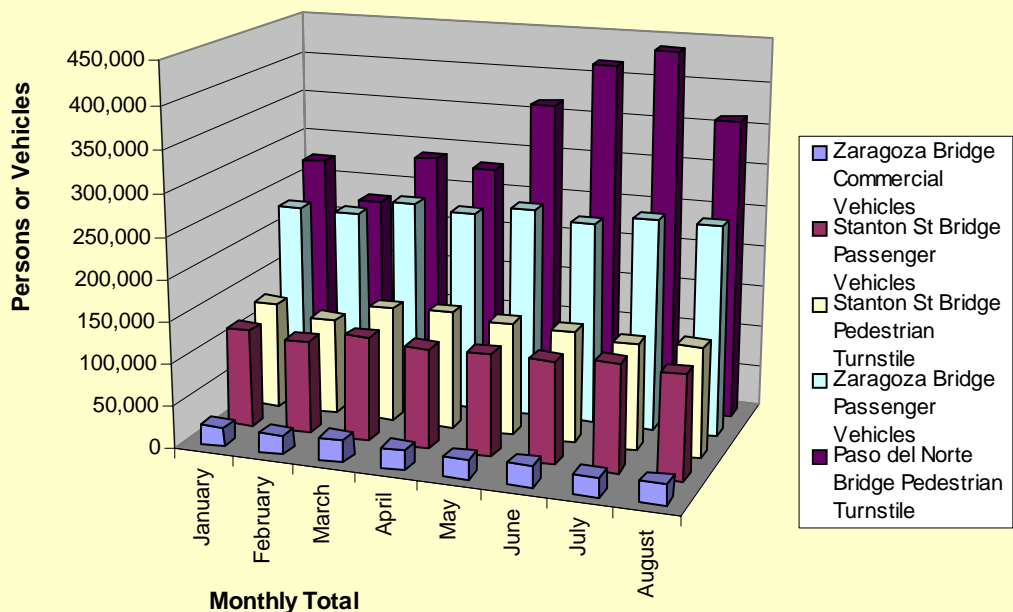
Administrative Review Approval

Austin Terrace	5	11	8	5
Chihuahuita	1	1	4	1
Downtown	0	0	1	1
Magoffin	2	2	0	0
Manhattan Heights	5	7	9	6
Old San Francisco	0	0	1	0
Sunset Heights	19	14	21	88
Ysleta	1	1	1	0
Mission Trail	0	0	0	0
Independent	0	1	2	0
Total	33	37	47	101

Southbound Border Crossings: From El Paso to Juarez
Totals by Bridge: 2004
Data Provided by the City of El Paso, Street Department

	Zaragoza Bridge Commercial Vehicles	Stanton St Bridge Passenger Vehicles	Stanton St Bridge Pedestrian Turnstile	Zaragoza Bridge Passenger Vehicles	Paso del Norte Bridge Pedestrian Turnstile
January	23,032	117,622	129,184	231,412	273,185
February	22,557	111,983	116,686	228,768	227,540
March	26,214	125,329	138,987	249,024	287,445
April	24,388	119,855	141,428	243,029	280,148
May	23,567	122,188	135,775	254,342	364,290
June	25,533	121,866	134,443	243,177	416,743
July	23,018	128,063	127,588	253,460	437,068
August	25,008	124,451	132,302	253,888	360,060

Southbound Traffic Volumes: El Paso to Juarez
January to August 2004
City of El Paso Street Department





Community Calendar: Citywide Meeting Schedule October through December, 2004

(For Information concerning Neighborhood Association Meetings, please proceed to the Neighborhoods First portion of the City website: <http://www.elpasotexas.gov>)

October

- October 4 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- October 11 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- October 14 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- October 18 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- October 25 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- October 25 Water Conservation Advisory Board: 3:30 PM, Texas A & M University Research Center, 541-4904
- October 28 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024

November

- November 1 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- November 8 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- November 11 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- November 15 Water Conservation Advisory Board: 3:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, Planning Conference Room, 541-4904
- November 15 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024

Community Calendar: Continued**December**

December 2 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor,
City Council Chambers, 541-4024

December 6 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor,
City Council Chambers, 541-4024

December 6 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor,
City Council Chambers, 541-4024

December 16 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor,
City Council Chambers, 541-4024

December 20 Water Conservation Advisory Board: 3:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza,
2nd Floor, Planning Conference Room, 541-4904

December 27 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor,
City Council Chambers, 541-4024

Helpful Telephone Numbers:

<u>Activity:</u>	<u>Telephone:</u>	<u>Activity:</u>	<u>Telephone:</u>
Main Office	541-4024	Long Range Planning	541-4633
Director	541-4193	Neighborhoods First	541-4918
Database & Support	541-4718	Neighborhood Planners	
Demographics	541-4721	Northeast	541-4930
Historic Preservation	541-4723	Northwest	541-4730
Land Development	541-4635	Central	541-4932
Zoning	541-4925	East	541-4192
Subdivisions	541-4903	Lower Valley	541-4502
Addresses	541-4936	Thoroughfares	541-4632
ZBA	541-4027		